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Consumer Price Index, Phoenix area – February 2021

Area prices were up 1.0 percent over the past two months, up 1.0 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Phoenix area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), advanced 1.0 percent for the two months ending in February 2021, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the February increase was influenced by higher prices for gasoline and shelter. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.0 percent. Food prices rose 3.8 percent. Energy prices decreased 4.7 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy rose 1.0 percent over the year. (See [table 1](#).)

Food

Food prices increased 0.6 percent for the two months ending in February. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home rose 0.7 percent. Higher prices for nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials (4.7 percent) and cereals and bakery products (3.0 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for fruits and vegetables (-2.9 percent). Prices for food away from home increased 0.5 percent over the two-month period.

Over the year, food prices rose 3.8 percent. Prices for food at home rose 4.5 percent since a year ago, led by higher prices for dairy and related products (12.2 percent). Prices for food away from home advanced 3.1 percent.

Energy

The energy index rose 8.4 percent for the two months ending in February. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (15.6 percent). Prices for natural gas service jumped 14.7 percent, and prices for electricity edged up 0.2 percent for the same period.

Energy prices decreased 4.7 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-10.1 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service jumped 13.0 percent, and prices for electricity increased 0.9 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.6 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for other goods and services (4.2 percent) and shelter (0.8 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for alcoholic beverages (-2.8 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.0 percent. Components contributing to the increase included used cars and trucks (9.4 percent) and shelter (3.7 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price decreases in apparel (-7.9 percent) and recreation (-3.7 percent).

The April 2021 Consumer Price Index for the Phoenix area is scheduled to be released on May 12, 2021.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on February 2021 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in February was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at <https://www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm>.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measures of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan area covered in this release consists of Maricopa and Pinal Counties in the State of Arizona.

Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Feb. 2021	Feb. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021
Expenditure category						
All items	145.660	-	147.186	1.0	1.0	-
Food and beverages	155.853	-	156.457	3.7	0.4	-
Food	156.999	-	157.951	3.8	0.6	-
Food at home	152.179	152.969	153.238	4.5	0.7	0.2
Cereals and bakery products	189.992	-	195.735	3.0	3.0	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	181.781	-	183.322	1.5	0.8	-
Dairy and related products	126.791	-	129.853	12.2	2.4	-
Fruits and vegetables	132.540	-	128.660	0.0	-2.9	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	114.864	-	120.277	10.3	4.7	-
Other food at home	150.985	-	149.874	4.2	-0.7	-
Food away from home.....	165.287	-	166.140	3.1	0.5	-
Alcoholic beverages	146.423	-	142.287	2.7	-2.8	-
Housing	154.282	-	155.488	3.0	0.8	-
Shelter	163.601	164.169	164.876	3.7	0.8	0.4
Rent of primary residence	174.271	175.149	175.726	4.0	0.8	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences	162.039	162.710	163.408	3.8	0.8	0.4
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence	162.039	162.710	163.408	3.8	0.8	0.4
Fuels and utilities.....	155.554	-	158.741	3.6	2.0	-
Household energy	150.946	152.928	153.232	2.0	1.5	0.2
Energy services.....	150.612	152.595	152.872	2.0	1.5	0.2
Electricity	161.090	161.414	161.414	0.9	0.2	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service	96.064	108.190	110.151	13.0	14.7	1.8
Household furnishings and operations.....	98.753	-	98.541	-2.3	-0.2	-
Apparel	122.862	-	126.906	-7.9	3.3	-
Transportation	121.357	-	125.638	-4.0	3.5	-
Private transportation	125.588	-	129.895	-2.6	3.4	-
New and used motor vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-
New vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Used cars and trucks.....	92.699	-	92.490	9.4	-0.2	-
Motor fuel	190.154	203.324	219.613	-10.1	15.5	8.0
Gasoline (all types).....	190.402	203.710	220.077	-10.1	15.6	8.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular(1).....	189.038	202.749	219.450	-10.6	16.1	8.2
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(1).....	206.112	218.204	236.082	-7.2	14.5	8.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium(1).....	200.427	211.875	226.383	-7.5	13.0	6.8
Motor vehicle insurance	156.315	-	158.538	-	1.4	-
Medical care	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreation	113.834	-	114.490	-3.7	0.6	-
Education and communication	118.420	-	118.410	1.3	0.0	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other goods and services	147.535	-	153.790	2.4	4.2	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	145.660	-	147.186	1.0	1.0	-
Commodities	123.650	-	124.984	-0.7	1.1	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	107.813	-	109.419	-3.2	1.5	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	139.693	-	143.896	-5.8	3.0	-
Durables	79.799	-	79.700	-0.2	-0.1	-
Services.....	160.942	-	162.598	2.0	1.0	-
Special aggregate indexes						

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Feb. 2021	Feb. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021
All items less medical care	142.159	-	144.020	0.9	1.3	-
All items less shelter.....	136.545	-	138.173	-0.4	1.2	-
Commodities less food	109.164	-	110.619	-3.0	1.3	-
Nondurables	148.175	-	150.556	-1.0	1.6	-
Nondurables less food.....	139.938	-	143.592	-5.3	2.6	-
Services less rent of shelter	157.450	-	159.531	0.2	1.3	-
Services less medical care services.....	156.900	-	158.694	1.8	1.1	-
Energy	171.292	178.265	185.649	-4.7	8.4	4.1
All items less energy	144.025	-	144.891	1.4	0.6	-
All items less food and energy	141.993	-	142.846	1.0	0.6	-

Footnotes

(1) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.